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Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SS-15 SP-02 INR-07 NSC-05
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O R 201000Z MAR 77
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5235
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO NIACT IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY KINSHASA IMMEDIATE
WMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM 2773
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY GABORONE

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUSAKA 0742

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, ZA, CG
SUBJECT: GRZ INSPIRED ARTICLE BLAMES US AID TO ZAIRE FOR BRINGING
SUPER POWER RIVALRY TO CENTRAL AFRICA

REF: LUSAKA 0715 AND STATE 61927 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: IN WHAT WE BELIEVE TO BE A STATE HOUSE-INSPIRED COMMENT-
ARY, TIMES OF ZAMBIA SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT MARCH 20 CITES THE
US AS RESPONSIBLE FOR BRINGING SUPER POWER RIVALRY TO CENTRAL
AFRICA BY PROVIDING ZAIRE WITH MILITARY EQUIPMENT. SPECIAL
CORRESPONDENT ALSO GIVES CREDENCE TO THE IDEA THAT BY ITS
ACTIONS THE WEST IS OUT TO HARASS THE VISIT OF PODGORNY.
END SUMMARY

1. POINTING OUT THAT ZAIRE AND ANGOLA HAVE NEVER BEEN THE BEST
OF FRIENDS, TIMES ARTICLE LEADS OFF WITH REASONABLY OBJECTIVE
RESUME OF CROSS BORDER ACTIONS BETWEEN ZAIRE AND ANGOLA. THE
MOVEMENT OF TROOPS FROM ANGOLA TO SHABA ON MARCH 10 WAS ZAIRE'S
TURN TO FEEL THE WEIGHT OF RETALIATION. ZAIRE ACCUSED INFLUENTIAL
FOREIGN POWERS OF BEING BEHIND THE ATTACK LAUNCHED BY MERCENARIES.
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IT HAS NEVER BEEN MADE CLEAR WHO THESE MERCENARIES MIGHT BE.
ANGOLA HAS DENIED ALL RESPONSIBILITY.
ARTICLE THEN GOES ON TO MAKE THE FOLLOWING POINTS:
---ZAIRE ATTACKED THE FRONTLINE STATES IN ITS PRESS FOR UNDER-
TAKING SUBVERSIVE ACTIONS AGAINST ITS NEIGHBORS JUST AT THE TIME
IT WAS ACCUSING ANGOLA OF BEING BEHIND THE ATTACK ON SHABA.
---US, FRANCE AND BELGIUM ARE POURING MILITARY HARDWARE INTO

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ZAIRE. "SO ONCE AGAIN THIS PART OF AFRICA IS ABOUT TO BE ENGULFED IN ANOTHER SUPER POWER RIVALRY." ALTHOUGH, ZAIRE HAS NOT BEEN PRECISE IN DEFINING EXACTLY WHO IS BEHIND ATTACKS INTO SHABA, REFERENCES TO "NETO' FOREIGN MASTERS" POINTS IN THE DIRECTION OF THE USSR AND CUBA. THERE IS NO QUESTION ABOUT WHO IS RESPONDING TO MOBUTU'S PLEAS FOR HELP; THEY ARE THE US, FRANCE AND BELGIUM - ARCH RIVALS OF THE SOVIET UNION. THUS, AN UNHEALTHY SITUATION HAS ONCE AGAIN BEEN INTRODUCED INTO CENTRAL AFRICA. -- PODGORNY AND CASTRO VISITS HAVE NOT GONE UNREMARKED IN THE WHITE HOUSE, PENTAGON, THE ELYSEE AND OTHER WESTERN CAPITALS. IN REACTION, THE US HAS CHOSEN TO SHOW THE FLAY BY SENDING THE ENTERPRISE TO THE INDIAN OCEAN, AND MEETINGS HAVE TAKEN PLACE BETWEEN VORSTER AND AMERICAN AND BRITISH AMBASSADORS IN PRETORIA. AN EASTERN EUROPEAN DIPLOMAT IS QUOTED AS SAYING, "THE WEST IS OUT TO HARRASS THE VISIT OF PRESIDENT PODGORNY AND CASTRO." ONCE AGAIN THE WEST HAS BEEN AFFLICTED BY "REDS UNDER THE BED PARANOIA."
---EVERYONE IN THE REGION IS NERVOUSLY WATCHING THE SHABA SITUATION, PRAYING THAT IT WILL FIZZLE OUT SO AFRICAN BROTHERHOOD CAN PREVAIL.
---QUOTING AN UNIDENTIFIED SOURCE, ARTICLE STATES, "SUPER POWER INVOLVEMENT IS NOT WANTED IN AFRICA. IF THE AMERICANS AND THEIR ALLIES DO THAT, WHAT IS THERE TO STOP OTHERS FROM DOING THE SAME? DIFFICULTIES ALWAYS ARISE BETWEEN SISTER COUNTRIES, BUT THIS SHOULD NOT BE EXPLOITED BY OUTSIDERS. THESE PEOPLE FLYING WEAPONS INTO THE REGION ARE MAKING IT LESS SAFE. WE DO NOT NEED THEIR ARMS BECAUSE IT ONLY MAKES THE SITUATION EXTREMELY DANGEROUS AND EXPLOSIVE?"
---ONE HOPES THAT THE NEXT CRUCIAL DAYS WILL NOT LEAD TO AN CONFIDENTIAL

ESCALATION IN THE FIGHTING BETWEEN THE TWO INDEPENDENT AFRICAN STATES. SELF INTEREST SHOULD DICTATE THAT THE TWO NEIGHBORS RESOLVE THEIR DIFFERENCES. DOUBTS HAVE BEEN RAISED ABOUT THE FUTURE OF THIS REGION OF AFRICA, BUT "THESE DOUBTS COULD BE CLEARED UP ONCE AND FOR ALL IF OUTSIDERS STOPPED MEDDLING IN AFRICAN AFFAIRS."
---PEACE AND STABILITY IN AFRICA AS A WHOLE, PARTICULARLY AMONG THE FRONTLINE STATES, IS THE MOST DESIRED GOAL.

COMMENT: WE BELIEVE THIS ARTICLE IS AN ACCURATE REFLECTION OF GRZ THINKING ON THE SHABA INVASION. THIS PARTICULAR FORUM HAS BEEN USED IN THE PAST TO PROJECT STATE HOUSE VIEWS. IT FOLLOWS THE LINE OF FOREIGN MINISTER MWALE'S COMMENTS TO AMBASSADOR REF LUSAKA TEL). ZAMBIA AT THIS POINT IS MOST CONSCIOUS OF ITS VULNERABILITY TO ITS COASTAL NEIGHBORS -- ANGOLA, TANZANIA AND MOZAMBIQUE. ABOVE ALL IT WISHES TO AVOID HAVING TO CHOOSE SIDES BETWEEN AFRICANS SUPPORTED BY THE SOVIETS AND THOSE SUPPORTED BY THE WEST, AS IN THE CASE OF ANGOLA WHERE IT LOST SO MUCH PRESTIGE. IF A CHOICE HAD TO BE MADE, IT PROBABLY WOULD

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SIDE WITH ITS FRONT LINE COLLEAGUES WHICH CONTROL ITS LIFELINES.
PERHAPS IN THE BACKGROUND OF ITS THINKING IS ALSO THE RECORD
OF PERFORMANCE OF WHICH SIDE GAVE THE MOST EFFECTIVE ASSISTANCE
IN ANGOLA. ANOTHER FACTOR, OF COURSE, IS THE FORTHCOMING VISITS
THIS WEEK OF CASTRO AND PODGORNY TO LUSAKA. THE ZAMBIAN ATTITUDE
AS REFLECTED HERE SHOULD BE KEPT IN MIND IN CONSIDERING
THE POINTS RAISED IN REF STATE TEL.
LOW

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